

MEMORANDUM

Adopted at Meeting of 1/17/74

January 17, 1974

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

FROM: Robert T. Kenney, Director

SUBJECT: TEXT AMENDMENT APPLICATION NO. 39: USE ITEM NO. 30: PRIVATE CLUBS
CONDITIONAL IN H AND L DISTRICTS

For some time, various community groups have been concerned about bars which operate under club licenses in H (apartment) and L (local business) districts. A new development in South Boston is the private drinking and entertainment club with no liquor license at all. A few people will incorporate as a club and acquire a vacant store. Several of these have been in H and L districts, where private clubs are allowed. Sometimes they have been on the ground floor of a residential building. The incorporators board up the windows and install a peephole in the door, speakeasy style. It is quite probable that liquor is sold to "members" but this is difficult to establish since clients are screened. Undoubtedly these clubs would claim that each member provided his own refreshments. The establishments tend to be noisy in themselves and to produce nighttime pedestrian and auto traffic.

The South Boston Residents Group suggested making private clubs conditional in the new H-1-50 apartment district which was created in 1972 and mapped to cover much of South Boston. However, a call to the Intelligence Division of the Vice Squad indicated that the private club problem is not limited to South Boston, and that zoning control over the establishment of new clubs would be helpful to the Police Department. We therefore propose an amendment to the Zoning Code which would make use Item No. 30 "private club (including quarters of fraternal organizations) operated for member only" conditional rather than allowed in H (apartment) and L (local business) districts. Local business districts usually abut residence districts and frequently combine business and residence in the same building.

The attached draft of such an amendment has not been reviewed by Corporation Counsel at the time of preparation of the report; it may be revised before presentation to the Zoning Commission. I therefore request that the Authority approve the amendment in principle, and authorize the Advisor to the Zoning Commission to petition for a text amendment which embodies the general intent of the attached draft.

Recommend approval.

VOTED: That in connection with Text Amendment Application No. 39, which would make private clubs operated for members only a conditional use in H and L districts, the Boston Redevelopment Authority endorses the attached draft amendment in principle and authorizes the Advisor to the Zoning Commission to petition the Zoning Commission for an amendment to the Zoning Code which is in accord with the purpose of the attached draft amendment.

Attachment.

Text Amendment Application No. 39
Advisor to the Zoning Commission
Use Item 30. Private Clubs
Conditional in H and L districts

TO THE ZONING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF BOSTON:

The advisor to the Zoning Commission, acting in accord with Chapter 665 of the Acts of 1956, as amended, hereby petitions to amend the Boston Zoning Code as follows:

1. By striking out, in Table A of Section 8-7, Use Item No. 30 respecting a private club, and inserting in place thereof the following use item:

30 Private club (including quarters of fraternal organizations) operated for members only . . . FC*C*/CA/CCC

- * Provided (1) that no parking area or active outdoor recreation area is nearer any lot line than the front yard depth required by this code for the lot, and (2) that, unless after public notice and hearing and subject to the provisions of Section 6-2, 6-3 and 6-4, the Board of Appeal grants permission therefor, there are no accommodations for spectators nor outdoor floodlights nor any indoor or outdoor activity which is in itself noisy.